

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 ACDA-19 DRC-01 AID-20 /148 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2407

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, KS, JA

SUBJECT: PROTEST CONTINUES OVER TANAKA'S REMARKS

REF: SEOUL 727

1. FEB 2 REMARK ATTRIBUTED TO PRIME MINISTER TANAKA THAT "PAST HISTORY IS A FACT" HAS REIGNITED KOREAN INDIGNATION ORIGINALLY AROUSED BY TANAKA'S STATEMENT ON "BENEFITS" JAPANESE COLONIAL PZMIOD (REFTEL). PRIME MINISTER'S SECOND CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENT REPORTEDLY SAID WHEN ASKED, IN CONTEXT OF PREVIOUS REMARKS, IF GOJ ADMITS THAT PAST OCCUPAL ON ACTS OF AGRESSION.

2. PRESS HAS GIVEN EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO STORY, REPORTING THAT FOREIGN MINISTER KIM FEB 4 ASKED AMBASSADOR USHIROKU FOR CLARIFICATION OF STATEMENT. OPPOSITION NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP) ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD MAKE OFFICIAL PROTEST TO JAPANESE EMBASSY. NDP SPOKESMAN QUOTED AS SAYING TANAKA'S WORDS WERE "EXTREMELY ARROGANT."

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3. FEB 7 PRESS REPORTS THAT USHIROKU HAS CONVEYED

GOJ CLARIFICATION OF REMARKS, STATING THAT THE GOJ
REGRETS AND FEELS REMORSE FOR THE "UNHAPPY PERIOD"
IN KOREA-JAPAN RELATIONS. FORMULATION IS SIMILAR TO
THAT USED BY GOJ AT TIME OF ROK-JAPAN NORMALIZATION.
WE UNDERSTAND AMBASSADOR USHIROKU HAD PROPOSED THAT GOJ
RESORT TO THAT FORMULATION AS WAY TO QUIET FUROR HERE
OVER TANAKA'S ORIGINAL REMARKS AND HIS LATER
"CLARIFICATION."

4. COMMENT: PRIME MINISTER TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT

HE HAS INSTRUCTED PRESS TO USE RESTRAINT IN
HANDLING CURRENT TEMPEST OVER TANAKA'S REMARKS AND OTHER JAPANESE
THEMES. PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THAT ROKG IS AWARE
THAT ANTI-JAPANESE THEMES COULD BE USED BY STUDENTS
AND OTHERS AS EXCUSE FOR DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH ROKG
MIGHT FIND TURNED AGAINST ITSELF.
HABIB

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